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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted at Mississippi State University (MSU) Meridian, to evaluate the student teaching experience and to determine adjustments required to improve the teacher education program. Participants consisted of 81 elementary, secondary, and special education students from two MSU campuses. Instruments utilized in the study included a 38-item, 5-point scale, and student journals describing attitudes toward the classroom, the supervising teacher, the university supervisor, the students, and the actual teaching encounters. A review of related literature recommends careful analysis of the cooperating teachers' qualifications and careful matching of student teachers with supervising teachers. Findings suggest that: (1) student teachers need assistance in the undergraduate classes to deal with the pressures and difficulties of the student teaching experience; and (2) an assessment of personality factors of prospective teachers can determine if certain characteristics predispose students to success or failure in the student teaching programs. An appendix lists key words and/or descriptors (both positive and negative terms) for analysis of student teaching journals generated by faculty and by students. (LL)

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Comparing Attitudes of Students Toward Their Student Teaching Experiences Mississippi State University

By

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A paper presented at The Annual Meeting of
Mid-South Educational Research Association
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Comparing Attitudes of Students Toward their Student Teaching Experiences

Introduction

For the past several years, teacher educators have engaged in the processes of reforming their programs to encompass the most recent reforms in education across the United States. A great impact has been felt in most education programs due to budget cuts and deficits in higher education funding; many institutions presently exist without sufficient funds and technology to assist teacher education student gain the best education. Because of the shift of funding and the loss of funds, evaluations of the programs offered by institutions which serve the education field have become imperative. The best evaluations assist in program delineation, program streamlining, and/or program enhancement. The best way to provide a functional program is to involve students in assessments which will give information about the effectiveness of their educational experiences. Practice teaching or student teaching is one area which serves to initiate preservice teachers into the

mainstream of the educational milieu. It is here that students determine whether their educational program has prepared them sufficiently to become the teachers of the future. The student teaching experiences cover such a wide range of course preparation, content, implementation, and application that these experiences, in effect, gauge whether the program has given the student sufficient expertise to achieve his/her goals in the actual classroom situation. By measuring the attitudes of students who are engaged in student teaching, it is possible to determine whether these students view themselves and their preparation in a positive or negative way. Positive experiences in the weeks of student teaching usually indicate that students feel good about what they have learned and are ready to assume the responsibilities that accompany full-time teaching. Negative attitudes, beyond the expected anxiety and anticipation, may, however, indicate that the student does not feel that he/she has fully mastered all of the course content which will make him/her feel adequate to the task of teaching. It must also be understood that personality factors

accompany any evaluation of attitudes; to compensate for these factors and for the existing, underlying belief systems of students, journals of student teaching experiences assist in the research for these particular factors.

The initial construction of an instrument to measure the attitudes of Mississippi State University students on both the main campus and the branch campus began in 1989. The survey was constructed to meet needs for an evaluation instrument required by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The Mississippi Student Teacher Attitude Inventory (MS-STAI) consisted of 38 items, with responses on a Likert scale of one to five (one = Strongly Disagree; five = Strongly Agree). The instrument was given to all students (136) at both MSU-Starkville and MSU-Meridian in the spring semester of 1990. This sample represented both secondary and elementary majors. The sample was predominantly female. MSU-Meridian furnished approximately 17 percent of this sample; MSU-Starkville furnished 83 percent. This initial survey was used to determine the

internal consistency of the instrument. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was .94 and the standardized-item alpha was .95 for this sample.

The survey established a feedback system for student teaching experiences on both campuses, but the main focus was to compare how the students varied in their experiences between the two campuses. The profile of MSU-Starkville students varies considerably from the profile of the MSU-Meridian students. The enrollment of the MSU-Starkville campus is traditionally made up of younger students who are recent high school or junior college graduates from all 82 counties in Mississippi. MSU-Meridian students come from the surrounding counties of East-Central Mississippi (24+ counties). The MSU-Starkville and MSU-Meridian students are described in statistical analyses from data collected at registration. MSU-Starkville students are described as being between the ages of under 22 to 26. The majority of MSU-Meridian students, in contrast, fall into the age category of 31 to 45. The education enrollment at MSU-Starkville encompasses more than 1650 students for all grade

levels of undergraduates. The same enrollment at MSU-Meridian is approximately 125. The majority of MSU-Starkville students are unmarried and live in the dormitories or in the apartments surrounding the campus. The MSU-Meridian students are generally married, with children, and with various responsibilities which frequently include full-time jobs; these students live at home and usually drive to campus for day and night classes; main campus students usually do not attend night classes and return home only for weekends.

Students from both campuses take the Core I through IV program established by Mississippi State University for teacher certification purposes. Strong similarities in this program exist because the Course Outlines and preparations for teaching are the same. Teachers on both campuses must sit in on the class before being approved to teach any of the Core courses. Only those teachers who have been so approved can teach on either campus. Efforts are made to assess the programs at both campuses regularly so that differentiations between courses are kept to a minimum.

Students at the MSU-Starkville campus usually learn in larger classes; however, enrollment in some classes at MSU-Meridian run between 30 and 40 students. There are fewer day classes at MSU-Meridian, but the day classes are much larger than the night classes.

The purpose of the research on student teaching experiences is to evaluate the success of the experiences and to determine if there are necessary adjustments required to make the teacher education program function more effectively and efficiently. The research in this particular time frame included journals kept by the MSU-Meridian students to indicate attitudes toward the classroom, the supervising teacher, the MSU supervisor, the students, and the actual teaching encounters. This part of the research provided further reinforcement of the statistical analyses of the data obtained from the MS-STAI (Benton and Richardson, 1989). The use of such multiple methods of evaluation should improve the quality of the teacher education assessment (Galluzzo and Prankratz, 1990).

Review of Related Literature

Attitudes and Student Teaching Experiences

One of the questions related to the study of attitudes is "Do attitudes serve as a predictor of behavior?" Kraus (1990) studied this relationship in a meta-analysis of 83 studies of behavior and attitude to determine if a possibility exists for predictive capability. Kraus (1990) attempted to find all published studies which met four requirements on attitude and behavior for his meta-analysis. these requirements included: "(1) attitudes were correlated with future behavior, (2) attitudes and behavior were measured on separate occasions, (3) attitudes and behavior were measured for the same subjects, and (4) no attempt was made to change attitudes during the study," (p. 3). The average correlation for these studies was .38. Sixty-four of the studies he examined showed significant correlations between attitude and behavior. In his conclusions, Kraus (1990) stated that attitudes "significantly and substantially predict future behavior" (p. 6). Kraus' study gives a potential new avenue for use with prediction of success

in the student teaching experiences and with success in full-time teaching.

A study which examined education students with similar profiles was completed by Reeves-Kazelskis, Kersh, and Kazelskis (1990) at the University of Southern Mississippi. The authors reported in the study that "(1) elementary and secondary students did not differ in their perceptions of the importance of the six areas of preservice training that they evaluated; and (2) transfer students did not differ from nontransfer students in their teaching concerns after student teaching nor in their perceptions of the importance and degree of preparation in the six areas they evaluated" (p. 14). The six areas of concern were identified by factor analysis of the 44 items on the rating instrument designed by Kramer (1982). They were: Instruction (implementation and evaluation), Personal Attributes, Instructional Planning, Classroom Management, and two dimensions of academic competence (Academic I and Academic II) (p. 12). The elementary education students were more positive about their preparation to teach than were the secondary education

students in the ares of Instruction, Classroom Management, and Instructional Planning. Elementary education students indicated higher concerns for these dimensions: Impact, School Climate, Acceptance by Students, and Classroom Performance. The authors found that "elementary and secondary preservice teachers differ in their perceptions of their preparation and in their levels of concern after student teaching" (p. 18) and indicated that future studies of a similar nature would include interviews, journals, efficacy measures and control orientation (Ben-Peretz & Kremer-Hagon, 1990; Bolin, 1990; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990).

In another study, Nortman (1991) hypothesized that students would become more traditional in their beliefs during the student teaching process. He further hypothesized that secondary students would exhibit less support for progressive attitudes than elementary students and that secondary students would become more traditional. His survey included 205 students from three universities in central Ohio. Secondary students exhibited more traditional beliefs toward students, discipline, and the importance of the affective domain

educational goals. The findings of this study implied that elementary students beliefs remain relatively unchanged during the student teaching process; this might result from the underlying belief system of the respondents. The existence of secondary students' belief systems provides another reason for careful evaluation of the teacher education program and its effectiveness. Nortman (1991) suggested that "teacher preparation programs must delineate those attitudes deemed desirable. However, the systematic delineation of desirable attitudes should not represent a final statement or philosophy but rather a statement of an interrelated set of attitudes which are continuously scrutinized by faculty and students" (pp. 12-13). One of the implications of Nortman's study is that changes in attitudes occur during the student teaching experience that are not anticipated during the instructional period of teacher education but which must be considered as an integral part of the growth of the preservice teacher toward his/her full-time responsibilities during in-service teaching. The effect of the student teaching experiences on secondary

teachers must be examined more closely over time, and the need exists for more reflective thinking and more supervision by the college or university supervisor during the weeks when these student teachers are in the actual classroom; however, these traditional beliefs exhibited by secondary students are aligned with the relatively greater emphasis on academic achievement as grade level increases.

Studies of student teaching vary widely and demonstrate the concerns of teacher educators, institutions of higher learning, individual educators, and in-service teachers. Cruickshank (1990) surveyed a number of studies of Phi Delta Kappa; his research included models for research on teaching, effective schools studies, a rationale for investigation, and limitations and advantages of such research. Cruickshank's material is an excellent source for valuable studies which parallel the course of the present review.

One study identified by Cruickshank (1990) was that of Bontempo and Digman (1985). According to these authors, undergraduates who enter teaching viewed

teaching as important (43%), rewarding (39%), underrated (28%), and difficult (12%).

Pigge and Marso (1986) investigated changes in students' levels of anxiety, attitudes, concerns, and confidence during their teacher training program. The 581 subjects of the study were surveyed at three different stages: Group One, students who were entry level; Group Two, students who were preparing to student teach; and Group Three, students who had completed student teaching. The predominantly female sample (75%) represented elementary preparation (36%), secondary education (27%), and special education (19%). All of the subjects were administered a battery of surveys: the Teacher Concerns Questionnaire, a demographic survey, the Attitude toward Teaching as a Career Scale, and the Teaching Anxiety Scale. Though there were some significant differences in the results of the surveys, there was no change in the attitudes of the respondents toward teaching. It was possible to determine that elementary majors had a more positive attitude toward teaching following the student teaching requirement; males and secondary majors reported less

positive attitudes. This study confirms the findings of other studies with regard to the attitudes of both elementary and secondary education students.

How do students become the best teachers? According to Book, Byers, and Freeman (1983), the overriding response to a study of preservice teachers' attitudes was that experience is the best teacher. They reported that their subjects expected "on the job training and the supervised teaching experiences to be the most valuable sources of professional knowledge" (p. 10). Were this to be the case with all student populations, there would be no need to evaluate the teacher education program because the program appears to have little real impact in the attitudes of student teachers. Most students, however, value the balance of the material taught with the real applications found in their student teaching.

In their study of student teachers' educational values, Purcell and Seiforth (1981) examined the attitudes of student teachers before and after their student teaching experiences. The questionnaire used by the authors contained 21 items and covered teaching

methods, lesson preparation, and the relationship between the supervising teacher and the student teacher. Demographic variables were sex, type of class, and subject area. The subjects were students at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; there were 120 student teachers involved in this survey. The relevance of this study was found in the conclusion that student teachers' attitudes changed in an unexpected way during their student teaching experiences. This study found that student teachers valued traditional educational principles and practices less after they finished student teaching. As with other studies of this type, it is difficult to define why attitudes change toward traditional principles and practices. One might surmise that recent educational reforms have encouraged students to adopt a more flexible attitude toward change and toward the innovations which proliferate on every hand in teaching methods and technology. Also, educational reforms and "report cards" have given students a predetermined conception that traditional principles are not working effectively and that it is necessary to discard

outmoded methods. Whether this attitude toward tradition is truly beneficial to a beginning teacher would be difficult to assess.

Hanes and others (1984) examined a group of 123 student teachers from Western Kentucky University's Secondary Education Program. Respondents were given a survey with 25 items to determine their attitudes toward their student teaching experiences. The finding of interest from this study was that most student teachers attitudes were positive toward their experiences as student teachers. The higher-academic achieving students were less positive.

McCutcheon, Schmidt, and Bolden (1991) examined student teaching from the point of view of supervisors' rating, academic achievement variables, and personality characteristics. This study investigated the possibility that "personality may be a significant predictor of selected global teaching behaviors" (p. 38). Seventy-nine students participated in the study at Ohio University during 1989-1990. These students represented elementary, secondary, and special education preparations. The instrument was designed by

the investigator; it contained 40 items and was used by the supervising teachers to rate the student teachers. Pilot testing was done in the Spring and Fall of 1989; the KR-21 formula yielded a coefficient of .83 for its reliability. In their conclusions, the authors stated: "In addition to predicting desirable behaviors, . . . the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) also appears useful in predicting certain behaviors that might be in need of remediation by a supervisor" (p. 42). The authors recommended future research on personality factors and successful classroom performance to help define programs and admissions to teacher candidacy.

Student teacher attitudes are being investigated on a regular basis to determine direction for programs of teacher education and to determine success in these programs; it is questionable, however, whether these investigations are taking place on a scale that will be effective in changing the national picture of such programs. Success by the student teacher in his/her practice teaching experiences is determined by a number of variables which must be considered to present the broad spectrum of evaluation which will provide

adequate information to the institution, the supervising teacher, and the student himself/herself. There must be a concerted effort to incorporate more of these variables into the evaluations of student teaching experiences at teacher-preparation institutions nationwide.

Journals and Reflective Thinking as a Part of Evaluation

In a study which was concerned entirely with elementary level teacher candidates, Maxie (1989) investigated concerns and needs of student teachers. Maxie included analytic, in-depth descriptive and interpretive accounts of common characteristics found in individual case studies. Her research design was qualitative; she used interviews, classroom observations and program descriptions, as well as journals and interviews. One finding of interest was that student teachers felt that they were engaging in the real world of activities when they student taught. Also of interest was the use of journal data to record concerns and efforts to resolve these concerns. Maxie analyzed and coded the journals and interviews

according to concerns about self, task, and impact. Maxie also found that "application of teacher education to teaching practice (inquiry into teaching) does occur at the self-concerns level" (p. 28). She further stated: "Given the emergent, pupil-focused perspective of teacher education and the value stance toward instructional analysis (theory into practice), survival concerns suggest a conflict between teacher preparation and teaching practice" (p. 28). Survival concerns do change as the student progressively engages in student teaching; apparently, student teaching gives the student teacher an opportunity to learn problem-solving skills and to learn methods to resolve concerns. From her findings and conclusions, it seems that Maxie has touched upon an issue which has been experienced with MSU-Meridian student teachers and recorded in their journals from the Spring 1990. Maxie suggests that directors of educational programs and administrators of public schools "may need to examine the criteria for selecting cooperating teachers, including the teacher's view of the evaluation/supervision process;

communication style; and view toward allocating authority to student teachers" (p. 32).

Holmes (1990) reported on a four-year study which investigated four elementary teacher candidates to determine their inductive characteristics and their concerns and priorities. Journals were the primary source of data for the study. Holmes examined attitude as a part of his study which sought to address problems with preservice teacher concerns and how these may be considered during the undergraduate instructional period. Similar concerns were attributed to inservice teachers during their first year. A category system was used to evaluate the journals; under the category of Attitude the following items were included: "(1) positive reaction to situation; (2) frustration or negative reaction to situation; (3) anxiety, suspicion or doubt about situation; (4) empathy with others, and (5) objective outlook" (p. 21). In the interviews, the category Attitude included two questions: "(a) What are some of your personal reactions to teaching? and (b) Does your attitude toward school and teaching occupy your thoughts much?" (p. 22). Holmes reported

that journals furnished a wealth of information that was not available through usual means of assessing the success of the student teaching experience.

Reflective thinking has received much attention in recent years. According to Cruickshank (1990), "This instructional approach refers to efforts that encourage preservice and inservice teachers to become more thoughtful and wise practitioners (Cruickshank, 1987; Zeichner, 1987). Cruickshank also identified researchers on Reflective Teaching which was developed at Ohio State University: Beeler et al. (1985); Cruickshank, Kennedy, Williams, Holton, and Fay (1981); McKee (1986); Peters (1980); Peters and Moore (1980); and Troyer (1988). He provided a summary of some of these studies; for example, he and his colleagues compared student teachers who had participated in pre-service training in Reflective Thinking sessions with those who had no such training. They found that the students differed; those who were trained were better able to produce "more analytical statements about teaching and learning" (p. 119) and "they were 'less anxious,' 'less frightened,' and 'more confident' about

commencing student teaching" (p. 119). McKee (1986) recommended videotaping lessons for review and summary purposes and further affirmed the efficacy of using Reflective Thinking in lesson preparation, delivery, and preparation. According to Cruickshank, Troyer's (1988) study "investigated the effect of Reflective Teaching and a modification of it (the addition of a conceptual component) on the subjects' level of cognitive thought about teaching and learning" (p. 120). This study supported Reflective Thinking and raised the explanatory/hypothetical, justificatory, and critical abilities of the subjects" (p. 120).

According to Cook, Young, and Culter (1989), use of journal writing to promote reflective thinking about pedagogical issues is part of a growing trend in educational programs in teacher training institutions across the United States. Findings from their study implied that "teacher educators may use either structured or unstructured reflective teaching for preservice teachers with equal confidence" (p. 9). The authors recommended a combined approach to aid in the growth of students' reflective abilities; the writers

recommended also that the goal of lifelong reflection be inculcated in students and encouraged self-directed, free, and open journal writing to accomplish this goal.

From the literature, it is possible to obtain a picture of broad dimensions within the field of attitude investigation. What may have been successful with one group may be unsuccessful under other circumstances. It is anticipated that future research between groups of students at MSU-Starkville and MSU-Meridian and within the two groups will incorporate both journals and reflective thinking procedures of a wider nature than has been used in past evaluations. According to Benton and Richardson (1990) the studies which examine student teachers' attitudes toward student teaching approach the evaluation in a variety of ways: questionnaires developed by authors, standardized instruments, interviews, journals, and/or self-report questionnaires. Conclusions from selected studies were:

"1. Socialization into teaching was affected by a number of variables, including personality, perceived or anticipated experiences, teacher preparation

programs, interaction with cooperating teachers, the climate/environment of the school where practice teaching occurs, and past experiences as a student in conservative and traditional settings.

"2. Change in attitudes and concerns occurred in almost all cases; sometimes moving towards a more moderate position and usually adaptive in nature.

"3. Discontinuity existed between the learning experienced in university preparation programs and actual practice in the classroom.

"4. Most student teachers were concerned with self-adequacy and survival" (pp. 13-14).

Instrument

The Mississippi Student Teacher Attitude Inventory was constructed by the authors in Fall 1989 (Benton and Richardson, 1990). It contains 38 items expressed as statements and uses a Likert (1967) five-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. (See Appendix A for the MS-STAI). The initial sample of respondents were 136 students from both MSU-Starkville and MSU-Meridian campuses. The reliability was determined in the pilot study of student teachers in

Spring 1990; the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was .94 and the standardized-item alpha was .95.

As a further method of evaluation of the student teaching experiences at MSU-Meridian, students were required to keep and to submit a journal which incorporated their attitudes toward each day's teaching activities. This qualitative analysis consisted of construction of a list of possible positive and negative expression which might be used to designate experiences in the journals. A brainstorming session of full-time faculty and adjunct faculty at MSU-Meridian produced the list (See Appendix A for list). The journals were then read and analyzed for positive and negative attitudes according to the number of positive or negative expressions found in each student's journal. A further list of expressions was compiled after the journals were read; this list includes additional expressions that were not previously listed by the faculty (See Appendix A for this list, also.)

Sample

The sample for the study consisted of 35 MSU-Meridian students and 46 MSU-Starkville students. No efforts were made to distinguish among demographic variables for this study; however, the sample included elementary, secondary, and special education student teachers. The sample was predominantly female since enrollment in the teacher education programs on both campuses is predominantly female.

Procedure/Analysis of Data

Data collection was accomplished by the Director of Student Teaching at MSU-Starkville and by the Chairman of the Division of Education at MSU-Meridian. The data were obtained during the final recap of the student teaching experiences in the Professional Seminar which is a part of the requirements for student teaching. The data were then analyzed using the SPSS-PC (4.0) program available in the computer facilities at MSU-Meridian. To confirm reliability, a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of .91 was obtained for this sample, with a standardized-item alpha of .93. The responses

for the items were analyzed using oneway analysis of variance.

Findings

The sample from MSU-Starkville was compared to the sample from MSU-Meridian. A significant difference was found between the two groups for two items. The analysis of variance for these items is shown in Table 1.

(Insert Table 1 about here)

Item 8 stated: My student teaching responsibilities do not restrict my non-professional responsibilities. Forty-six percent of the student teachers from MSU-Starkville reported Strongly Agree or Agree for this item. Fifty-seven percent of the student teachers from MSU-Meridian reported Strongly Disagree or Disagree. Percentages of responses are shown in Table 2.

(Insert Table 2 about here)

It is possible that demographic data attributes to the difference reported on this item. Starkville campus students are usually full-time students. Fewer are married with families. Most of these students are preparing for a career directly after graduating from

high school/junior college. Most of these students live on campus or in the immediate Starkville area. Students at Meridian campus are usually married with families and jobs. Many of these students travel long distances to be in attendance at classes. MSU-Meridian students are usually enrolled in both day and night classes in order to complete a schedule which will allow them to graduate in a reasonable time frame and to take the classes in the proper sequence. These students are also frequently older than the MSU-Starkville students.

Item 15 stated: I do not feel stress from MTAI (Mississippi Teacher Assessment Instrument) evaluations. (See Table 1 for analysis of variance). A large percent (52%) of MSU-Starkville student teachers reported Strongly Disagree or Disagree for this statement; however, an even larger proportion of MSU-Meridian student teachers reported Strongly Disagree or Disagree (80%). Thirty percent of MSU-Starkville student teachers reported Strongly Agree or Agree (less than 10%) reported Strongly Agree; and 14 percent of MSU-Meridian student teachers reported

Strongly Agree or Agree (both categories were less than 10%). (See Table 2 for percentages of responses). There is no evidence to account for the strong difference between the two groups other than the demographic factors previously mentioned.

The journals of the MSU-Meridian students provided further information about the experiences of the student teachers during the Spring 1991 semester. This was also an initial attempt to begin fostering reflective thinking among the students at MSU-Meridian. All 35 student teachers provided journals for analysis out of the 35 student teachers surveyed with the MS-STAI. Fifteen journals demonstrated positive attitudes on the part of the respondents, and 12 journals demonstrated predominantly negative attitudes. Eight of the journals were deemed neither positive or negative, but were designated as neutral because there were less than five key words different in the totals of the descriptors identified for positives and negatives.

Because of the nature of the assignment of journals during the Professional Seminar, the student

teachers did not specifically identify causes of concern unless those contributed to a negative experience. One student teacher continually mentioned that he/she was required to imitate the cooperating teacher and that he/she was not allowed to utilize any of the whole language experiences learned from the classroom instruction prior to student teaching. Another mentioned lack of discipline in the classroom as a negative factor on several occasions. One complained that the cooperating teacher criticized his/her teaching in the presence of the children in various reading groups and questioned whether this was acceptable behavior on the part of the cooperating teacher. One student indicated that he/she was so desperate over student teaching that he/she would like only to survive and would never take a job teaching; this was related to lack of a school-wide discipline plan and tactics to assist with classroom management. Only two of the journals indicated totally negative experiences. The remaining journals which were designated as negative did indicate some positive experiences.

Those journals which were positive generally indicated that the student teachers felt good about themselves, good about their task accomplishments, and good about the students. These student teachers were also supported with positive praise and encouragement from their cooperating teachers and their supervising teachers. These students also indicated greater involvement with reflective thinking than did the student teachers who expressed negative experiences.

The journals served to give a more total picture of the student teachers and their classroom experiences. All the journals indicated that the student teachers were ill-prepared to deal with the realities of the teaching environment. One student teacher was astonished that a kindergarten student licked the table during lunch. Most of the females commented on the necessity of dressing appropriately for the teaching environment: low shoes, looser clothes, hair done up to prevent sticky fingers from touching it, less jewelry, and no high heels when on feet all day. The general comment in most journals was

that the student teachers had never been so busy or so tired.

In regard to the findings of the MS-STAI, Item 8 indicated that the student teaching responsibilities interfered with the non-professional responsibilities. This is clearly seen in the journals; students were overwhelmed with the work load and with the requirements for lesson plans and units in addition to the day-long presence in the classroom. One student had a baby during the student teaching time period. Other students indicated that they were absent from the classroom because of illness or the illness of their children; one child was hospitalized for a week. One student teacher's cooperating teacher's husband died during the term. The student teachers had little idea when they began the term how demanding upon them the student teaching experience would be; they did not anticipate becoming so emotionally and physically drained as they progressed through taking on more and more classes until they were teaching a full load. Most of them indicated that they needed more time to prepare and to plan than they had; late night hours of

work were indicated in several of the journals. Item 15 indicated that the student teachers felt stress and anxiety about the Mississippi Teacher Assessment Instrument evaluation which was a part of their requirements. The journals showed a great feeling of elation on the part of most of the student teachers when they were informed that they had passed this requirement. Most seem to feel that the days after their MTAI were much easier and that it was more possible to relax and enjoy the experience.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There must be considerable evaluation of the programs which produce our future teachers. Mississippi State University-Meridian has determined that our student teachers need assistance in the undergraduate classes to deal with the pressures and difficulties of the student teaching experience. Further, it is planned to assess the personality factors of future classes of teacher education students to determine if there are certain characteristics evident which predispose students to success or to failure in the student teaching program. As was

recommended in the literature, careful analysis of the cooperating teachers' qualifications and the careful matching of the student teachers with supervising teachers are possible extensions of the effort to alleviate the stressful aspects and to intensify the positive aspects of student.

Table 1. Analysis of Variance for Items when Campuses Were Compared

Variables	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	F PROB
Item 8:					
Between Groups	1	10.5932	10.5932	6.5066	.0127*
Within Groups	79	128.6167	1.6281		
TOTAL	80	139.2099			
Item 15:					
Between Groups	1	11.7556	11.7556	7.1917	.0089*
Within Groups	79	129.1333	1.6346		
TOTAL	80	140.8889			

*F PROB significant at .05 level of probability

Table 2: Frequencies and percents of responses for the MS-STAI 1991

Variable	MSU-STARKVILLE			MSU-MERIDIAN		
	Scale	Frequency	Percent	Scale	Frequency	Percent
Item 8:						
	1	5	10.87	1	5	14.29
	2	14	30.43	2	15	42.86
	3	6	13.05	3	5	14.29
	4	14	30.43	4	5	14.28
	5	7	15.22	5	5	14.28
Total	46		100.00	35		100.00
Item 15:						
	1	7	15.22	1	18	51.43
	2	17	36.96	2	10	28.57
	3	8	17.38	3	2	5.716
	4	12	26.09	4	2	5.71
	5	2	4.35	5	3	8.58
Total	46		100.00	35		100.00

Scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) 4 (Agree)
2 (Disagree) 5 (Strongly Agree)
3 (Undecided or neutral)

Appendix A

Key Words and/or Descriptors for Analysis of MSU-Meridian Student Teaching Journals - Faculty Generated

Positive Terms:	Negative Terms:
stimulating	anxious
useful	afraid
practical	scared
exciting	apprehensive
helpful	useless
encouraging	waste of time
inspired	distressed
confident	uneasy
assured	nervous
pleased	impatient
rewarding	fatigued (tired)
at ease	lost
good day (great day)	inexperienced

Note: Nouns, verbs, and or phrases are included

Key Words or Descriptors for Analysis
of MSU-Meridian Student Teaching
Journals - Student Generated

smiling face
O.K. day
did very well
feeling more comfortable
enjoyed teaching
sigh of relief

good week
on cloud nine
opener
feel like a real teacher
smooth
comfortable
so far so good
fell in love with kids

frowning face
terrible
not the best day
failed miserably
Ugh!!
Who wouldn't worry
about MTAI?
TGIF
really an eye-

What a bummer!
managed to survive
really wound up
problems already
guess I'm on my own
wild day
weird

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